

Attorney Docket No: 0180-018
Attorney Customer No: 45270
Serial Number: 10/749,191

PATENT

REMARKS

Claims 1-19 are pending in the subject application. By this response, Claims 1, 4, 8, 9, 10, 12, and 17 are amended. Claims 2, 3, 16, 18 and 19 are cancelled. Care has been exercised to avoid the introduction of new matter.

REJECTION BASED UPON CONVENTIONAL ART

Claims 1, 9, 14 - 19 stand rejected under 35 USC Section 102(b) as being clearly anticipated by US Patent No. 6,272,801 to Suh, the Examiner relies on Figures 1 and 2 of the Suh patent and has kindly pointed out each of the elements interpreted in Suh as anticipating the recitation of the subject claims.

Claims 2 - 8 and 10 - 13 stand rejected under 35 USC Section 103(a), at being unpatentable over US Patent No. 6,272,801 to Suh in view of US Patent No. 3,885,445 to Montano. The Suh patent is relied upon as disclosing a connecting shaft but lacking a pressed fit connection including a spring and connecting shaft arranged to be complementary to the spring. The Montano patent is relied upon as disclosing a press fit connection including a spring and a complimentary shaft. The Examiner concludes it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify the Suh device to include the spring clip of Montano.

The Examiner has objected to claim 8 as depending upon a rejected base claim. The Examiner further indicates that this claim would be allowable if amended to include the base claim and any intervening claims.

ARGUMENTS

The rejections based upon conventional art are respectfully traversed on ground that each and every element of the revised independent claims (1, 9) are not taught or suggested by any combination of documents relied upon by the Examiner.

In particular, it is respectfully submitted that a circular or annular spring clip, with an aperture, is not used to hold an opposed connecting shaft in the conventional art to hold two opposed frames together. Independent claim 1 has been amended to better emphasize this distinction.

It is also respectfully urged that none of the documents cited by the Examiner discloses the use of alternating connector pairs, that is a female and a male connector paired with each other on the same mounting frame. The arrangement of these pairs is identical for each mounting frame. As a result, when each frame is oriented to face another identical frame, the male and female connectors are able to be aligned with complementary connectors so that the two frames can be easily press fit together. This arrangement of pairs of alternating male/female connectors is not suggested in any of the documents relied upon by the examiner. As a result, none of the other systems disclosed provides the advantage of requiring just one type of mounting frame for both sides of the

arrangement. Independent claim 9 has been amended by this response to reflect these distinctions.

It is respectfully urged that the combination of the Suh patent with the teachings of Montano is inappropriate. The springs for which the Montano patent is relied are used in a connection between the ends of pillars to form articulated links in a chain. Further, the springs in Montano are used to provide bias to the real connections between adjacent pillars forming the links of the chain. This is not the same functionality as found with the present invention in which the springs are annular with apertures. The spring like nature of the aperture holds the connecting rod from the opposite frame. In the case of the present invention, the spring is used to grab and hold a connector. In contrast, the spring in Montano patent is merely used to provide bias to support the real holding member. Consequently, the functions of the respective springs are different as are the environments. Accordingly, one skill in the art of window and fixture frames would not look the art of chain fabrication and assembly to find techniques to solve the known problems of connection frame pieces.

Dependent claims 4 – 8, 10 – 15 and 17, depending from independent claims 1, and 9, respectively, each recite additional limitations, such as nylon bushings. These limitations, in combination with those previously described of the

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independent claims are not disclosed or suggested by any combination of the cited documents. Accordingly, the dependent claims are patentable for reasons in addition to those supporting the patentability of the independent claims.

Based upon the aforementioned comments and amendments, it is urged that all claims are now distinguished over the conventional art of record.

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CONCLUSION

Based upon the aforementioned comments and amendments, it is urged that claims are in condition for allowance, as is the remainder of the subject patent application. Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Should the Examiner have any questions, comments or suggestions, or should issues remain, she is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned by telephone for a prompt and satisfactory resolution.

Respectfully Submitted,
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